

"I can stroke thy velvet fur," continued Uncle Robert.

"He's not under the—lilac bush," pouted Chess, running up, "nor any—where—around."

Uncle Robert went on as if he hadn't heard the startling news.

"I can hear thy gentle purr."

They could all hear it. Uncle Robert's "eppertaph" had been composed with his eyes fastened upon the slowly advancing form of Beauty Spot. Now he came close, peered with mild interest into the empty little grave, and murmured inquiringly, "Poroo-wang?"

Lottie hugged him with rapture unspeakable. Tears of joy poured down her cheeks.

"Oh, you rascal," cried Chess, "you precious old rascal, why didn't you stay dead till after we'd had our beautiful Sunday funeral?"

THE MUSKRAT GLOVES.

The summer when Hugh Greenwood was eight years old, it was decided that he ought not to go to school for a while, and must be out in the air of the fields and woods nearly all of every day. That was why Hughie was left on his grandfather's farm when the rest of the family went back to the city in the fall.

Of course, in a way, Hughie was glad. He missed father and mother and his sisters; but being on the farm meant all kinds of out-door fun which he could not have in the city.

What he wanted most was to do some trapping. This was because of the gloves, of course. Uncle Norman had given them to him when the mornings began to get real sharp and snappy with cold. They were very warm gloves, made of muskrat fur, and Uncle Norman said that Oliver Brumstead had caught the muskrats himself, in Hughie's grandfather's swamp.

Were there any more there? Oh, yes, probably hundreds of them; and sometimes there were mink, and now and then, but not often, an otter.

"Why, just think of it, Uncle Norman!" said Hughie. "If I had some traps I could go down to the swamp and catch muskrats enough for a fur coat for mamma and a nice buffalo robe for papa!"

"Well!" said Uncle Norman, "you might get enough for the fur coat, but I don't know about the buffalo robe. It takes an awful lot of muskrat skins to make a buffalo robe." And then he laughed. But he also said there were plenty of traps in the shed, and he got some of them down and cleaned them, and showed Hughie how to set and place them.

It was a great day for Hugh when he started out the first time to visit his line of traps. The sun was bright and the crust of the snow was frozen hard, so walking was easy; but it was very cold. I tell you, those fur gloves felt good then, and so did the woolen muffler which grandmother had tied about his ears.

The first trap, to Hughie's disappointment, held no muskrat, and had not even been sprung; and it was the same with the second one. The next was quite a long way off, and suddenly, before Hughie reached it, a big rabbit jumped out of some bushes and dashed away into a hole at the roots of a big tree.

The traps were forgotten then, and Hughie rushed to the tree, and kneeling down, looked into the hole.

The rabbit was nowhere in sight, and so Hughie pushed his hand in, and then his whole arm, and felt around.

Still he could not feel any rabbits, but his fingers did find a little place, way in, through which he could just push his hand. Perhaps the rabbit had squeezed through. He pushed his hand in and felt. No, there was no rabbit. And then, when he tried to pull his hand out, he found he could not, because his fur glove caught on something sharp and rough, that felt like ice. Every time he pulled, the glove caught and held fast. Perhaps if he pulled hard it might give way and come off; but he knew that if he did, it would drop away down into the hole, and he would never see it again.

If he could only get his knife out and cut the hole bigger! But no, his knife was in his right hand pocket, and it was the right hand that was caught. He could move it back and forth a little way, and in and out a little way, but he could not get it free.

Hughie began to feel very cold. When he had been running or walking fast he had been warm enough, but lying still, face down, in the shadow of the great tree trunk, the chill struck through him like a knife. Perhaps he would freeze to death before any one found him. The thought set him to shouting, "Grandpa! Grandpa! Grandp-a-a-a!"

It hurt him to lie so still, with his arm stretched out, and he began to bear more of his weight on the hand in the hole. Something under his hand felt very cold where his bare wrist rested on it, and then he could feel his hand and sleeve growing wet.

After a long time, as it seemed to Hughie, his arm tingled so that he just had to move it; and then, to his surprise, the hand came out of the hole with the glove all on it. It was some icicles and ragged edges of ice that had caught, and his warm hand resting on it so long, had thawed it enough to set him free.

It was a very thankful boy who got up and walked away. The first thing he did was to go back and pull up the two traps he had passed. Then he went to the others, and pulled them up, too, and took them back to the house.

"I don't want to catch any muskrats or rabbits or anything else," he told grandma, "because now I know how it feels to be caught in a trap. And if I had been a muskrat and got caught, and hollered as loud as I did, and anybody had heard me and come, he wouldn't have helped me out, would he, grandpa?"

"No, my boy, not if the hunter had wanted a buffalo robe."

"Well, I don't want mine that way," said Hughie.—F. W. Frenz, in *Youth's Companion*.

TEN COMMANDMENTS IN METER.

"Have thou no other gods but me,
Unto no image bow thy knee.
Take not the name of God in vain.
Do not the Sabbath day profane,
Honor thy father and mother, too,
And see that thou no murder do.
In conduct be thou chaste and clean,
And steal not though thy state be mean.
Of false report bear not the blot.
What is thy neighbor's covet not."

—Selected.